Threats of ecological disaster to India

2500. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK; Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in 'the Times of India' of 25th August, 1985 under the heading 'India faces ecological disaster'; and

(b) if so, what remedial measures Government have taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FOREST (SHRI Z.R. ANSARI) : (a) Yes Sir. The news item has referred to the recently published report brought out by the Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi, a Non-Governmental Organisation.

(b) Several measures have been taken by the Government for protection of environment since the First Five Year Plan. Some of the important schemes for soil conservation and land improvement are the following:—

—Centrally sponsored scheme for soil conservation in catchments of river valley projects ;

—Centrally sponsored scheme on integrated watershed management in the catchment of flood prone rivers ;

—Pilot programme for reclamation of ravines and gullies;

—treatment of saline and alkaline soils;

—Command area development.

Over the years, afforestation programmes have also been stepped up with special emphasis on social forestry. The National Wastelands Development Board has been set up with the object of raising fuel and fodder plantations on 5 million hectares every year.

Other major steps to improve the state of environemet in the country include enforcement of legislative and administrative measures for pollution control, the Ganga Action Plan, environmental appraisal of development projects, campaign for creating environmental awareness, setting up of State Pollution Control Boards and Departments of Environment, integrated eco-development programmes for conservation of selected ecosystems, and setting up of National Parks and sanctuaries.

Indo-Pak talks for trade relations

2501. SHRI KAPIL VERMA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) what has been the concrete outcome of talks between the Finance Ministers of India and Pakistan held in New Delhi from November, 14 to 16 on expansion of trade and economic relations between the two countries:

(b) what type of joint ventures are proposed to be started in the industrial field in the two countries and what steps are proposed to be taken to expand trade in public sector between the two countries ;

(c) whether Government propose to introduce direct dialling facilites between the two countries and float a new airline to knit all important centres of the region (S.A.R.C.); and

(d) what steps are being taken to translate into ation various proposals discussed between the two Ministers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN): (a) It was agreed

in principle to increase bilateral trade particularly in the private sector. Other subjects discussed related to economic cooperation, exchange of visits by delegation of industrialists and businessmen and possibility of establishing joint ventures.

(b) Details will be discussed at subsequent meetings to be held shortly including the next meeting of the sub-Commission on Trade formed under Indo-Pak Joint Commission and due to be held next month.

(c) The process of establishing facilities to introduce direct dialling between the two countries in progressing apace and when the facilities are fully established, direct dialling would be initiated. As far as a new airline to knit all important regional centres in the South Asia is concerned, as this proposal also involves participation by countries other than India and Pakistan, the matter will have to be discussed in the appropriate forum.

(d) A number of high level meetings are taking/scheduled to take place. The four Sub-Commissions under the Indo-Pak Joint commission are due to meet next month.

Expeditions to the Antarctica

2502. SHRI KALPNATH RAI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether any programme has been drawn up by Government for further expeditions to the Antarctica; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) and (b) The Government has constituted a high level Committee to draw up a detailed programme for Antarctic research. The fifth expedition was launched on 30-11-85.

T. V. manufacture

2503. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have allowed the multi-nationals and large houses to enter into the field of television manufacture ;

(b) whether Government have studied the implications of their decision ; and

(c) the steps that have been taken to safeguard the interests of the small sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL) : (a) There is a proposal to bring the policy regarding manufacture of television in line with that applicable to other electronics products, as per Policy Statement of 21st March, 1985.

(b) Yes Sir.

(c) The proposal takes into account interest of the small scale sector.

Longer Term Plan

2504. SHRI L. GANESAN :

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Prime Minister has asked the Planning Commission to prepare a 15-20 year plan:

(b) if so, what are the details thereof : and

(c) by when such a plan is likely to be submitted ?